

REMARKS

1. Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1-13, 15-30, and 32-35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (e) as allegedly being anticipated by Nation et al. (US patent no. 6,233,599).

Claim 36 stands rejected as allegedly being unpatentable over Nation in view of the official notice taken by the Examiner.

Claims 14 and 31 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

2. Response to Rejections

Applicant respectfully asks the Examiner for reconsideration of claims 1-36, as amended.

Claim 1 includes the limitations of cancelled claim 14. The Office Action indicated that cancelled claim 14 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Thus, the inclusion of the limitations of claim 14 into claim 1 places claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-13 and 15-17 in a condition for allowance.

Claim 18 includes the limitations of cancelled claim 31. The Office Action indicated that cancelled claim 31 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Thus, the inclusion of the limitations of claim 31 into claim 18 places claim 18 and its dependent claims 19-30 and 32-34 in a condition for allowance.

Claims 35 and 36 include features similar to those of claims 1 and 18. Claims 35 and 36 have been amended to include the limitations of cancelled claim 14. Thus, the inclusion of the limitations of claim 14 into claim 35 and claim 36 places claims 35 and 36 in a condition for allowance.

3. Conclusion

Having tendered the above remarks and amended the claims as indicated herein, Applicants respectfully submit that all rejections have been addressed and that the claims are now in a condition for allowance, which is earnestly solicited.

Authorization is hereby given to charge our Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any charges that may be due. Furthermore, if an extension is required, then Applicants hereby request such an extension.

Respectfully submitted,
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